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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; VIRGINIA TECH MASSACRE; SOUTH AMERICAN
ENERGY SUMMIT; 04/19/07; BUENOS AIRES

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

The most important international topics today include the Virginia Tech massacre; and the South American Energy Summit, which, according to daily-of-record "La Nacion" and liberal "Buenos Aires Herald," "ended without conclusive developments regarding the main items on the agenda."

2. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "What this doesn't show"

Liberal, English-language "Buenos Aires Herald" (04/19) carries an opinion piece by contributor James Neilson, who penned "... The initial reaction to Monday's Virginia Tech massacre was equally tendentious. No sooner did the word get out that 32 people had been shot dead by an as yet unidentified gunman, much of the world press started churning out articles painting the US as an extremely violent country overrun by Kalashnikov-toting lunatics who are only too willing to mow down anyone who is unfortunate enough to cross their path. It was also agreed that school-room or campus massacres are a US specialty...

"... In any event, once it became known that the Virginia Tech killer was not a brutish redneck in thrall to the National Rifle Association but a South Korean student it, became slightly harder to assume that the slaughter told us something terribly sinister about the US way of life or even about the folly of allowing sophisticated firearms to be sold over the counter with a minimum of paperwork. Perhaps Cho Seung Hui would not have done what he did had it not been for those permissive gun-laws, but if an individual with murder on his mind wants to get hold of a deadly weapon he will probably do so no matter what the law says...

"... For those whose primary goal in life is to denounce the failings of the US, almost everything that happens will be grist to their mill. This being the case, they are most unlikely to let the mere fact that the Virginia Tech massacre was the work of a foreign resident stand in their way."

- "Virginia and the tragedy posed by armed civilians"

Leading "Clarín" editorializes (04/19) "The Virginia University massacre has understandably shocked the entire world and revived the debate on the danger posed by the culture of owning arms in the US...

"The US has a wide spread culture of owning arms, which have sparked countless episodes of violence, among them the Virginia massacre. This is why, there is mounting controversy over the freedom to purchase and carry weapons...

"Latin America should not observe the problem posed by weapons in the hands of civilians as a problem affecting others... There has been an increasing tendency in Argentina during the last few years to carry weapons as a reaction to the country's prevailing lack of safety... In other Latin American countries, the problem is even more serious...

"Therefore, the Virginia massacre should lead us not only to watch the cultural drama in the US, but look at our own problems in this regard as well. In order to avoid murders as a consequence of gun violence, it is crucial to improve the living standards of the groups most affected by the problem and especially to expand policies to disarm civilians."

- "Unproductive energy summit"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" (04/19) editorializes "The First (South American) Energy Summit, which was held in Venezuela, showed once again the prevailing differing views in the main countries of the region not only regarding energy issues but the essential role institutions play in promoting countries' economic development.

"... The joint final statement included the energy problems of the hemisphere in general terms and ratified regional energy integration as a tool to promote social and economic development and poverty eradication. In the framework of differing views between Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, who hosted the event, and Brazilian President Lula on the development of ethanol as a substitute for oil, the presidents agreed to a statement without real definitions although it acknowledges ethanol as a viable option for the regional energy matrix.

"There was only agreement over vague issues such as changing the name of the South American Community of Nations and promising the creation of an energy regional council. However, no agreement was

reached on the creation of Banco del Sur... or on a regional association of gas exporting countries...

"... The summit ended without definitions on the main items of the agenda."

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